For once the eagle England being in prey,
To her unguarded nest the weasel Scot
Comes sneaking, and so sucks her princely eggs;
Playing the mouse in absence of the cat,
To spoil and havock more than she can eat[3].

EXE. It follows then, the cat must stay at home:
Yet that is but a curs'd necessity[4]:

[2] *If that you will France win,* &c.] Hall's Chronicle, Hen. V. year 2, fol. 7. (p. 2.) x POPE.

It is likewise found in Holinshed, and in the old anonymous play of King Henry V. STEEVENS.

[3] To SPOIL and havock more than she can eat.] It is not much the quality of the mouse to tear the food it comes at, but to run over it and defile it. The old quarto reads *spoile*: and the two first folios *tame*: from which last corrupted word I think I have retrieved the poet's genuine reading, *taint*. THEOBALD.

[4] Yet that is but a CURS'D necessity:] So the old quarto [1600]. The folios read *crustid*: neither of the words convey any tolerable idea: but give us a counter-reasoning, and not at all pertinent. We should read—"'scus'd necessity." It is Exeter's business to show there is no real necessity for staying at home: he must therefore mean, that though there be a seeming necessity, yet it is one that may be well *excused* and *got over.* WARBURTON.

Neither the old readings nor the emendation seem very satisfactory. "A *curs'd* necessity" has no sense: "a *scus'd* necessity" is so harsh that one would not admit it if any thing else can be found. "A *crush'd* necessity" may mean "a *necessity* which is *subdued* and *overpowered* by contrary reasons." We might read—"a *crude* necessity," a *necessity* not *complete*, or not well considered and digested; but it is too harsh. Sir T. Hanmer reads:

"Yet that is not 0* *course a* necessity."

JOHNSON.

"A *curs'd* necessity" means, I believe, only *an unfortunate necessity*. *Curs'd* in colloquial phrase, signifies any thing *unfortunate*. So we say, such a one leads a *cursed* life: another has got into a *cursed* scrape. It may mean, a necessity *to be execrated*.

This vulgarism is often used by Sir

Arthur Gorges in his translation of Lucan, 1614. So, book vii. p. 293 :

"His *cursed* fortune he condemned."

Again, p. 297.

"On the cruel destinies

The people pour *out cursed* cries,"